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County News for October 12, 2018.

Supervisors eye restriction on plastic straws – Santa Clarita Valley Signal

The L.A. County Board of Supervisors on Tuesday voted unanimously to restrict plastic straws in the county's unincorporated areas. If the draft ordinance gets final approval and goes into effect in January 2019, the unincorporated parts of L.A. County will see restaurants, bars and fast food establishments subjected to a restriction on plastic straws unless requested, which affects Santa Clarita Valley areas such as Castaic, Val Verde and Stevenson Ranch. Gov. Jerry Brown had already signed a bill limiting full-service restaurants supplying plastic, but this motion covers more restaurants and helps the disabled, co-authors Supervisors Sheila Kuehl and Janice Hahn said on Tuesday. more

by , , 2018-10-12

L.A. typhus outbreak adds fuel to the debates over homelessness and housing - Los Angeles Times

A man hospitalized for dehydration a few months ago at Los Angeles County-USC Medical Center started suffering a severe fever, and doctors weren't sure why. The patient was homeless, a clue to doctors that he might have typhus. Every year people contract flea-borne typhus in Southern California, mostly in Los Angeles County. Doctors did a blood test. "We sent it off, and lo and behold — typhus," County-USC Chief Medical Officer Dr. Brad Spellberg said. Since July, there have been nine cases of typhus in downtown Los Angeles, six of which infected homeless people, prompting health officials last week to declare an outbreak there. There have also been 20 cases in Pasadena this year, far more than the five typically seen there annually. Typhus outbreaks are often associated with poor hygiene and overcrowding. Los Angeles officials say they're corralling stray animals that could carry fleas, cleaning streets and encouraging people to treat their pets for fleas and put away trash that may attract infected animals. The outbreak has also fueled debates about homelessness and housing. L.A. Mayor Eric Garcetti this week pledged $300,000 to increase street cleaning downtown. But many fear that won't be enough to curb the growing number of cases and clear out the trash that has accumulated as the city's homeless population has spread. more

by , Los Angeles Times, 2018-10-12

This Downtown Street Is Covered in Piles of Rat-Infested Trash ~ Neglect By L.A. Officials Apparent During Typhus Outbreak ~ L.A. TACO

person built a ramshackle dwelling set amid trash piled five feet high and strewn along a wall for a hundred feet. Rats darted out from under the retch and rotten food, zigzagging every which way. These are not conditions you usually expect to see in the United States. But this is Ceres Avenue in downtown Los Angeles, just yesterday, Wednesday Oct. 10, and this is where trash comes to sleep. Sprawling piles of rat-infested trash were left ignored by the city and now could be a source of the recent typhus outbreak, NBC Los Angeles said in a report. The city's Department of Sanitation received more than 2,200 calls to 311 over a two-year period to pick up trash near homeless encampments, but failed to respond to more than half of those calls, according to the investigative report. "If someone is calling 311 and not getting

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through, that's unacceptable," Mayor Garcetti told NBC, responding to the information. The NBC report dubbed the area in downtown L.A. where nine typhus cases have been reported as "The Typhus Zone." The areas encompasses Skid Row, as well as nearby upscale residences and businesses. more

by , , 2018-10-12

Former police Explorers who say Irwindale cop abused them get $4-million settlement - Los Angeles Times

The Irwindale Police Department and a group that runs the agency's Explorer program for teens has agreed to pay $4 million to settle a lawsuit with three women who say they were abused by a former police officer who served as the program's advisor. The three former Explorer Scouts, who are now adults, say former Officer Daniel Camerano molested them during ride-alongs and in the Irwindale police station between 2007 and 2010, when they were between 14 and 17 years old, according to Los Angeles County court records. more

by , Los Angeles Times, 2018-10-12

Shark-detecting sonar buoy aimed at reducing attacks off Newport Beach coast - Los Angeles Times

A shark-detecting buoy installed off the Balboa Pier in Newport Beach is the latest tool in Southern California lifeguards' attempt to get ahead of a growing number of shark-related incidents in the region. The system, called the Clever Buoy, became operational Wednesday as part of a 60-day pilot project to test the sonar-equipped device's ability to alert lifeguards to sharks. The Clever Buoy will monitor a 500- to 600-yard stretch of open water between lifeguard Tower B and Coronado Street. The Clever Buoy has three sonar sensors that sit five feet off the ocean floor and communicate with a central buoy that will relay data to a communications tower on the pier. The nearby Junior Lifeguards headquarters will serve as a staging area for the equipment. Together, the buoy and sensors can detect nearby marine life, and based on the swimming patterns, identify whether an animal is a shark, dolphin or school of fish. more

by , Los Angeles Times, 2018-10-12

Heated debate erupts at Glendora town hall focusing on sanctuary state law – San Gabriel Valley Tribune

A Glendora town hall meeting intended to inform the community about SB 54 – the so-called sanctuary state law – devolved into a series of heated exchanges from people on both sides of the issue Thursday. As part of the town hall, panelists City Attorney William Wynder, Anita Lee, principal fiscal and policy analyst for the nonpartisan State Legislative Analyst's Office and Los Angeles County Sheriff's Commander Elier Morejon described the background, content and litigation surrounding the law. Signed into law last year, SB 54 limits interaction between local law enforcement and federal immigration officials — with exceptions, including cases that involve violent or "serious" felonies. The town hall did not address the city's closed-session vote in May to seek to file an friend-of-the-court brief related to the U.S. Government's lawsuit against the State of California challenging SB 54. "The purpose of this town hall is to enlighten us, to allow us to learn, to allow us to hear something maybe we didn't know, and hopefully we'll all go out with a better assessment of what SB 54 is," said Mayor Mendell Thompson as the meeting opened. more

by , San Gabriel Valley Tribune, 2018-10-12

Solana Beach refuses to support rezoning to allow Del Mar Resort - The San Diego Union-Tribune

A top-drawer resort proposed for a seaside Del Mar blufftop would obscure the ocean views of hundreds of nearby homeowners, Solana Beach City Council members said this week. The council voted unanimously Wednesday night to send Del Mar a letter opposing any zone change that would allow the Del Mar Resort's four-story buildings to be built on the triangular 16.5-acre site that overlooks Dog Beach and the mouth of the San Dieguito River. The property at the northern border of Del Mar has two large family residences on it, and is zoned for two-story estates. About one-third of the site is vacant and undeveloped. "People purchased their homes many years ago overlooking this property, knowing it was zoned for estate homes," Solana Beach Councilwoman Lesa Heebner said Wednesday during the council's discussion of the proposed resort. "Their views will be completely obliterated." more

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by , San Diego Union-Tribune, 2018-10-12

Counties are forgiving millions in juvenile detention fees owed by families — but not San Diego - The San Diego Union-Tribune

year ago, juvenile justice reform advocates in California notched another significant win in a years-long campaign to rework the system when Gov. Jerry Brown signed legislation banning counties from charging fees to parents and guardians of youths charged with crimes. About half the counties in the state have gone a step further and decided to forgive debts that families incurred before Jan. 1 of this year, when the law became effective. But 26 counties have not done so — including San Diego, where officials are still pursuing some $63 million in back fees. That is the largest single amount of any county in the state that has not forgiven debts, said Jessica Bartholow of the Western Center on Law & Poverty, one of a coalition of public interest legal groups who have pushed for the abolition of the fees. Advocates said the fees, which in some counties have been in place for decades, create long-term financial burdens for families, and fall disproportionately on blacks and Latinos who are arrested and detained at higher rates than other youths. They also say that some of the fees have been unlawfully levied — such as daily charges for being held in juvenile hall or other facilities that exceed a certain threshold. While the law stopped counties from charging the fees any longer, it did not require counties to forgive debts incurred from previous years. Since its passage, advocates have been working to get counties to do just that. more

by , San Diego Union-Tribune, 2018-10-12

County seeks input on drug abuse, mental health issues | Valley Roadrunner

If you've been affected or are concerned about these and other behavioral health issues, the County Health and Human Services Agency wants to hear from you. A series of nine, two-hour forums will be taking place throughout the region to gather public input about the types of services needed in the region to address these and other issues. One of these forums will be happening in Escondido. The County's goal is to gain insight from people who have experience with behavioral health issues, school violence and other issues, including people with mental or substance use issues who are experiencing homelessness. The County also wants to hear from their families, behavioral health services providers and community organizations. more

by , Valley Center-Roadrunner, 2018-10-12

Councilman Wants to Ground Plan to Turn Skydiving Building Into a Homelessness Center - Voice of San Diego

Mayor Kevin Faulconer's plan to quickly turn a shuttered East Village skydiving center into a service hub for homeless San Diegans has hit a snag. City Councilman Chris Ward, who represents downtown, says he won't support moving forward with the housing navigation center project until the city has a broader homelessness strategy to help it set priorities – and establish whether the navigation center project should even be a priority. "We need a holistic plan," said Ward, who chairs the City Council's homelessness committee. Another City Council Democrat, Barbara Bry, said Tuesday she agrees with Ward. "I think it's better at this point to keep (the East Village building) empty than to spend money on something we may not need, or may not be the best use of our money, since we have limited financial resources," Bry said. more

by , Voice of San Diego, 2018-10-12

SBA offers help to rural East County businesses By Jo Moreland

Small businesses in Alpine and the Mountain Empire can often find help through the U.S. Small Business Administration. That was the message on Oct. 9 at the monthly "Hot Topics Breakfast '"meeting of the Alpine Mountain Empire Chamber of Commerce. "Start. Grow. Expand. Recover," Jamye Pritchett Solorzano, economic development specialist administrative officer for the San Diego office, told Chamber members and guests at the Descanso Junction Restaurant in Descanso. "That's our motto." more

by , , 2018-10-12

San Diego County Sheriff's Department looking to fill multiple roles -

Sheriff's Recruiter Ysidro Granillo and Sheriff's Crime Lab Director Mike Grubb joined us in studio to discuss several roles the San Diego Sheriff's Department is looking to fill. more

by , KUSI - San Diego, 2018-10-12

Cal Fire-Riverside County Fire Department Station 29 gets new truck - Valley News

Anza's Cal Fire-Riverside County Station 29 has taken delivery of a brand-new tool to make rescues, medical calls, fires and other incidents a whole lot easier. The new tool is a shiny red and chrome Medic Patrol truck, replacing the former Medic Squad 29 truck. more

by , , 2018-10-12

Border fence replacement hailed by Trump is completed in Calexico - Los Angeles Times

Construction workers last week put up the final panel of a new border barrier in Calexico, Calif., a project touted by President Trump as the first part of his promised wall between Mexico and the U.S. Almost two years into Trump's presidency, Congress has so far avoided funding a full-fledged border wall. The approximately $1.6 billion in funding that has been awarded to border construction has focused on replacement barrier projects with restrictions about the type of structures that could be built with the money. That meant that the Trump administration couldn't build barriers that resemble the wall prototypes that were erected last year in Otay Mesa. Whether the Calexico barrier is actually part of Trump's promised wall has been heavily debated since the project was announced in February. The estimated $18-million project replaced just over two miles of a 1990s barrier made of steel Vietnam War-era military aircraft landing mats with 30-foot bollards — poles placed close together to restrict entry but allow people on either side to see through. more

by , Los Angeles Times, 2018-10-12

Short Term Rentals Create Ongoing Problems - Mountain News : News

Controversies surrounding Short Term Rental (STR) homes arose again at the Lake Arrowhead Municipal Advisory Council (MAC), which met Oct. 4 at Fire Station 91 in Lake Arrowhead. The San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors approved a revised STR ordinance in May 2017, making the owner or owner's agent responsible for handling complaints when visitors in rental units make too much noise (especially at night), build over-sized campfires in yards, infringe on neighboring residents' parking areas, and cause various other problems. The revised ordinance also implemented a 24/7 hotline for resolving problems. more

by , Lake Arrowhead Mountain News, 2018-10-12

Orange County DA Speaks about Future of Sober Living Task Force | Dana Point Times

This spring, Orange County District Attorney Tony Rackauckas debuted a task force designed to inspect and investigate the legitimacy of sober living homes, residences where patients of behavioral health and rehabilitation stay during their treatment. In recent months and years, government officials and community activists have sought to curtail many of them due to myriad reasons: the patients hadn't been getting proper medical treatment, the clients lacked direction and supervision, and health insurance scams had been reported by law enforcement agencies and media organizations. more

by , , 2018-10-12

Home firearm safety / basic handgun class | Valley Roadrunner

Though four San Diego County Supervisors are on record as opposing it, state law required them to approve putting a measure on the ballot in 2020 taking away their power to approve large housing developments in the back country and giving that power to voters. They did that yesterday. Enough verified signatures were

submitted, but not in time for next month's election. Approval of the Save Our San Diego Countryside measure would make the final decision on planning process-approved projects something to be decided by voters. Of the 13 General Plan Amendment development projects currently in process in the county, six would need voter approval if the measure were already in effect. Some of them could still be approved before the 2020 vote. Those projects include Lilac Hills Ranch just east of I-15 at Old Highway 395, Warner Ranch on Highway 76 just west of Pala, Warner Springs Resort in Warner Springs, and three smaller developments scattered around the county. more

by , Valley Center-Roadrunner, 2018-10-12

Dozens of Kern County residents incorrectly registered to vote | KBAK

More than 80 Kern County residents were improperly registered, the Kern County Elections office confirmed on Thursday. The Department of Motor Vehicles reported Monday that as many as 1,500 people may have been incorrectly registered to vote in California between April 23 and Sept. 25 because of a "processing error." The DMV said none of those people are living in the country illegally. But none of those 86 Kern County improperly registered residents voted in the recent election. more

by , Bakersfield Now, 2018-10-12

County seeks to fill vacancies on homelessness task force | | recorderonline.com

The Tulare County Board of Supervisors is seeking interested individuals to fill two vacant positions on the Tulare County Task Force on Homelessness, one position representing a low-income housing developer and the other position representing the educational sector. The purpose of the Task Force is to advise and assist the Health & Human Services Agency (HHSA) on the Agency's efforts to address homelessness issues affecting the community and to report to the Tulare County Board of Supervisors periodically. The responsibilities of the Task Force shall include the following: more

by , Recorder Online, 2018-10-12

Reward tripled to $15K for information in shooting death of condor in Tulare County

BAKERSFIELD, Calif. - A $15,000 reward is now being offered for information on a shooting and killing of an endangered California condor in Tulare County in May. On Thursday, the Center for Biological Diversity tripled the reward from its original $5,000 reward offered by U.S. Fish and Wildlife. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service officials continue investigating, looking for whoever was responsible for the condor's death. The endangered bird was found dead on private property south of Hot Springs Road and east Old Stage Coach Road in Tulare County sometime in May. A second condor was found dead in Kern County in July. more

by , , 2018-10-12

Turlock residents can hear about plans for expanded branch library | The Modesto Bee

Users of the Turlock branch of the Stanislaus County Library can get an update Tuesday, Oct. 16, on longstanding plans to expand it. County officials will present conceptual drawings and other details on the expansion of the Minaret Avenue branch at a 6 p.m. meeting at Covenant Village. The branch opened in 1968, when Turlock had about 13,000 people, and was designed for a population of 30,000. The city hit that mark in 1983 and now has about 73,000 residents. Cost estimates for the various options are still being prepared in advance of the meeting, said Patricia Hill Thomas, chief operations officer for the county. The meeting will feature ideas from WRNS Studio Architects, the San Francisco-based firm hired for the design. Friends of the Turlock Library will take part. The building has about 10,000 square feet for bookshelves and other furnishings but no separate space for events, such as children's story times. Project supporters seem to agree that the current location, on the east edge of downtown Turlock, is ideal. Past discussions have been about either adding a second story or expanding on a single floor. more

by , Modesto Bee, 2018-10-12

Calaveras County Water District board names interim general manager

The Calaveras County Water District, which provides water to more than 13,000 residential, commercial and municipal customers, has named an interim general manager, Jeffrey Meyer, who replaces the outgoing general manager, Dave Eggerton. Joel Metzger, CCWD's manager of external affairs, conservation and grants, made the announcement Wednesday after the elected board of directors named Meyer to begin his work as interim general manager on Oct. 15. more

by , Sonora Union Democrat, 2018-10-12

Water district selects interim general manager

The Calaveras County Water District board of directors appointed Director of Administrative Services Jeffrey Meyer as the interim general manager at a board meeting Wednesday. Current general manager Dave Eggerton will be starting a new position as Executive Director Designate of the Association of California Water Agencies on Nov. 1 after four years at CCWD. more

by , Calaveras Enterprise, 2018-10-12

Fighting fire with fire

Landowners heard from personnel from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection personnel and the Stanislaus National Forest, in addition to foresters, ecologists and retired firefighters Oct. 4 during a prescribed burn workshop at Ebbetts Pass Fire District in Arnold. The event was hosted by University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) – Central Sierra (El Dorado, Amador, Calaveras and Tuolumne Counties) Natural Resources Advisor Susie Kocher. more

by , Calaveras Enterprise, 2018-10-12

Felling raised concerns

Pacific Gas & Electric Co. is hosting a Tree Program Meeting this Saturday, Oct. 13, 9-11 a.m., at the Blue Lake Springs Homeowner Association amphitheater at 335 Blue Lake Springs Drive, in Arnold for homeowners with questions about the company's accelerated tree removals in recent weeks. The company's community wildfire safety program has raised concerns for several Arnold homeowners that the tree removals will have a devastating effect on the scenery and local ecology of the heavily forested community. more

by , Calaveras Enterprise, 2018-10-12

County 'Rocks the Purple' to support abuse victims | Local | hanfordsentinel.com

HANFORD — The sidewalks in Civic Park were lined with small purple flags Thursday morning, showing the way for those seeking information and help concerning domestic violence. The 445 flags each represented a case of domestic abuse reported in Kings County in 2017. "It is powerful when you see all these flags on the lawn, each representing a person," organizer and Kings County District Attorney's Office Victim-Witness Assistance Program Coordinator Julia Patino said. Kings Partnership for Prevention's annual Rock the Purple Luncheon took place Thursday morning as a way to raise awareness of domestic violence in Kings County and abroad. more

by , Hanford Sentinel, 2018-10-12

Hotel proposal catches commissioners off-guard | Simi Valley Acorn

A developer's plan to build a 72,700-square-foot industrial park at the site of Simi Valley Unified School District's former headquarters on Cochran Street hit a snag last week when city planners rejected the project's traffic study. At their meeting Oct. 3, planning commission members said they weren't satisfied with Westlake Village-based Darling Development Group's traffic study submitted for its proposed business park on a portion of the property at 875 E. Cochran St. Company owner Dick Darling said he had an alternate plan that could ease potential congestion by moving parking spaces from the east side of the property, where the main entrance is located, to the west side. But Commissioner Jim King said such changes "shouldn't be made on the fly in a meeting" and suggested the matter be continued until Darling returns with a formal proposal in writing. more

by , The Acorn, 2018-10-12

Senator to speak about new law | Simi Valley Acorn

State Sen. Hannah-Beth Jackson (D-Oxnard) will speak in support of SB 826, a Senate bill signed into law last month by Gov. Brown that makes California the first state in the nation to require women to be on the boards of directors for publicly traded corporations. Jackson will discuss the new law from 5:30 to 8 p.m. at a Tues., Oct. 16 meeting of the Ventura County chapter of the National Association of Women Business Owners. The program, "Using Our Collective Voice— Using Our Vote," will be at the Wedgewood Banquet Center, 901 Sterling Hills Drive, Camarillo. more

by , The Acorn, 2018-10-12

California elections: Young voters have 'potential to change politics'

One night a week, a group of Conejo Valley young adults meets at The Oaks mall. It would be typical teenage behavior and passersby might not take a second look, except these kids are planning how to engage young voters for the upcoming midterm election. Their focus is perhaps the most contentious school board race in Ventura County: the Conejo Valley Unified School District. "It's stressful because we have the ability to have all this power and be able to do so much, but whether we actually use that power is up to us and how we mobilize," said Bella Robakowski, a senior at Newbury Park High School and president of Never Again SoCal, a group of students dedicated to activism and civic engagement that came together last spring. "These are our lives on the line. We have all this power, we have to make sure we actually use it." more

by , Ventura County Star, 2018-10-12

Highways 101 and 33 being upgraded in Ventura County

The California Department of Transportation this week announced two projects that will make improvements to highways 33 and 101 in Ventura County. In coming months, work crews will replace and repair asphalt and concrete pavement, repair bridges and overlay new asphalt on Highway 33 between Highway 101 in Ventura and Parkview Drive in unincorporated Casitas Springs, Caltrans said. The project involves more than six miles totaling more than 24 lane miles. more

by , Ventura County Star, 2018-10-12

Law puts limits on trying juveniles as adults

A new law limiting the age of juvenile offenders who can be prosecuted as adults means a 15-year-old Oxnard boy accused in two 2018 murders will be tried in juvenile court. Senate Bill 1391 was signed into law Sept. 30 by Gov. Jerry Brown and states that juvenile offenders 14 and 15 years old can no longer be prosecuted as adults, regardless of the crime they are accused of committing. The governor issued a statement when he announced he'd signed the controversial bill opposed by families of crime victims and district attorneys across the state. "There is a fundamental principle at stake here: whether we want a society that at least attempts to reform the youngest offenders before consigning them to adult prisons where their likelihood of becoming a lifelong criminal is so much higher," Brown said in the statement. more

by , Ventura County Star, 2018-10-12

VCMC loses $15.5 million, year-end results show

Ventura County Medical Center closed the past fiscal year with a loss of $15.5 million, a deficit tied to chance events, relatively soft demand for surgeries that boost the bottom line and inadequate financial reports. Although the unaudited loss represents just 3 percent of the total spending of $491 million, it's almost $24 million off the expected net income of $8.3 million for the safety-net system serving large numbers of low-income patients. Supported by billings and government funding, the medical center includes the main hospital in Ventura, Santa Paula Hospital and more than 40 clinics around the county. more

by , Ventura County Star, 2018-10-12

Permits Streamlined for Farmworker Housing

"This is one of the more difficult things that has ever come to us," said 3rd District

Supervisor Joan Hartmann at the Board of Supervisors' Tuesday meeting. Streamlining the permit process for farmworker housing was under review, in the Agriculture I and II zones in the unincorporated areas of the county. This would make such housing easier for farm and ranch operators to build, but often at a significant distance from cities. That distance would also isolate the workers from community resources, argued members of CAUSE (Central Coast Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy). It could lead to a lack of information, health care, and public assistance, and it could make workers vulnerable to abuse and exploitation, they said. more

by , Santa Barbara Independent, 2018-10-12

Prison Yoga Holds Cocktail Party Fundraiser

On October 5, Prison Yoga Santa Barbara held a cocktail party at Yoga Soup to raise awareness and funds for the transformative work of this relatively new nonprofit. Prison Yoga provides yoga/meditation instruction to incarcerated adults at the S.B. County Main Jail and S.B. County Medium Security Facility and to youth held at Los Prietos Boys Camp and Santa Maria Juvenile Hall. more

by , Santa Barbara Independent, 2018-10-12

'Crime of silence': Lompoc vigil shines light on domestic violence

As a Santa Barbara County deputy district attorney for the past three years, Billy Ha said that more than half of the cases he's prosecuted have involved domestic violence. When selecting juries for those cases that go to trial, Ha said that he frequently hears a lot of skepticism from potential jurors. Often, he said, some will ask why the case is going to trial if the victim — typically a woman — doesn't want to prosecute, or they'll ask why they should they believe the word of the victim since "women make up things all the time." Sometimes, he said, they'll question the victim's motives or ask what she stands to gain. more

by , Santa Maria Times, 2018-10-12

The fight is on at Hollister Ranch, as coastal officials delay development in push for beach access - Los Angeles Times

After more than three decades of stops and stalls, the state this week made clear the fight for beach access at Hollister Ranch is far from over. Coastal officials revived efforts to create a long-delayed public path while also preventing a family from building on its slice of the ranch until all visitors can enjoy the 8.5 miles of secluded Santa Barbara County coastline. Earlier this year, the fight for access to some of the state's most unspoiled beaches seemed like a done deal in favor of ranch owners, who have long contended the environment has benefited from their private stewardship. A controversial state deal ceded a contested claim to access by land, and a veto by Gov. Jerry Brown last month was cheered by Hollister as a victory. But mounting outrage from beachgoers has kept the pressure on. "Because of the public outcry, I think every commissioner is of one mind that we are resolved to finally, one way or the other, get real public access by land through Hollister Ranch," California Coastal Commissioner Aaron Peskin said. "As a matter of policy, this commission is resolved to say that either Hollister Ranch is going to provide public access or we are going to interpret the law to say that there should be no future development there." more

by , Los Angeles Times, 2018-10-12

Santa Barbara County in record drought based on seven-year rainfall total | Local News | lompocrecord.com

While water supplies have rebounded for much of California, Santa Barbara County is still suffering from the worst drought in recent history, officials said. Following significant winter rains last year, Gov. Jerry Brown issued an executive order in April 2017 declaring the drought state of emergency over in most counties, including Santa Barbara County. But saying the drought is over doesn't make it so, as Robert Lewin, director of the county's Office of Emergency Management, indicated in a report to the Board of Supervisors this week. "Despite the governor ending the drought state of emergency, local drought conditions continue," Lewin said. more

by , Lompoc Record, 2018-10-12

Santa Barbara residents show up to rally against Trump's drilling and fracking expansion - KEYT

SANTA BARBARA, Calif. - Santa Barbara community members gathered at the Santa Barbara County Courthouse Sunken Gardens Thursday afternoon to rally against the Trump administration's plan to expand drilling and fracking up and down the coast. Local elected leaders, environmental groups, and community members gathered to protest against oil drilling and fracking. more

by , KEYT - Santa Barbara, 2018-10-12

County Taxpayers Association endorses $75 million Hancock bond measure - KEYT

SANTA MARIA, Calif. - The bond measure that would help renovate and upgrade facilities at Allan Hancock College picked up a key endorsement Thursday. "It's an honor and it's a privilege for the Taxpayers Association to support Measure Y," said Joe Armendariz, Santa Barbara County Taxpayers Association Executive Director. "We think it's an important investment in an important educational institution." more

by , KEYT - Santa Barbara, 2018-10-12

Students across SLO County learn about fire safety during annual Burn Relay | KSBY.com

Firefighters visited schools across San Luis Obispo County Thursday as part of the annual Alisa Ann Ruch Burn Foundation Burn Relay. The students were taught fire safety, including how to escape from or put out a fire. They learned the classic "stop, drop and roll" routine, as well as how to stay low and crawl out of a building if there's a lot of smoke. "We want to spread awareness of fire safety, we want to prevent burns from happening, that is definitely the main reason why we have the burn foundation," said Erika Corona-Mendoza, Alisa Ann Ruch Burn Foundation Regional Manager. Many of the schools raised money for the foundation and presented checks to the firefighters during their stops. more

by , , 2018-10-12

County businesses honored with Disability Employment Awards | KSBY.com

The Department of Rehabilitation and its community partners hosted the Disability Employment Awards breakfast Thursday morning in San Luis Obispo. Businesses and their employees were welcomed to enjoy an early morning meal to honor those in the community that bring on people with disabilities to their employment teams. Matt DeWolf, store manager at Smart and Final in Arroyo Grande, had nothing but kind words to say about the program that brings together hard-working employees with open work environments. DeWolf's lead service clerk, Robby Soley, has taught him a lot about what it means to be a manager, as well as life lessons he will take with him for the future. more

by , , 2018-10-12

Santa Cruz County's first all-inclusive playground

Santa Cruz County's first all-inclusive playground is designed for all children, and especially for children with special needs. more

by , KSBW News 8 -Santa Cruz, 2018-10-12

Measure G could cost SLO County CA taxpapers in lawsuits, jobs | The Tribune

Maybe you want to make sure fracking never happens in San Luis Obispo County. Or you want to phase out local oil production because you're concerned about climate change or groundwater contamination. Whatever the reason you support Measure G — if you do — you should know that it will probably cost taxpayer dollars. Skeptical? Just look what happened in Monterey County. That county spent nearly $1 million defending Measure Z, which banned fracking and new wells in unincorporated parts of the county — as Measure G proposes to do. more

by , San Luis Obispo Tribune, 2018-10-12

Coast Lines: County plans broadband forum Thursday – Santa Cruz Sentinel

APTOS — The County of Santa Cruz invites residents to its second “Broadband Service Forum” 6-8 p.m. Thursday at Aptos Junior High School, 1001 Huntington Drive. Attendees will hear from broadband providers about existing and future services. Confirmed participants include AT&T, Comcast, Cruzio, Etheric Networks, Loma Broadband, Ridge Wireless and Surfnet. The forum will be presented by the county Office for Economic Development, which has surveyed residents to map broadband deficiencies, and hosted by county Supervisor Zach Friend. “Expanding broadband services has been one of my priorities since I arrived on the Board of Supervisors, and we hope these forums lead to benefits for residents,” Friend said. more

by , Santa Cruz Sentinel, 2018-10-12

Santa Cruz County seeks nearly $11 million in state homeless grant funding – Santa Cruz Sentinel

LIVE OAK — Prior to seeking millions in state grant funding, those focused on the needs of Santa Cruz County’s homeless population are taking a fresh look at the region’s biggest needs. Permanent housing opportunities and emergency shelters, or so-called navigation centers, arose as among top priorities in recent strategic planning meetings. Potentially included among those likely focus areas is the stalled joint city of Santa Cruz-Santa Cruz County effort to find a site to host a temporary homeless shelter in the North County. more

by , Santa Cruz Sentinel, 2018-10-12

Hurricane Michael Hit the Parts of Florida Least Prepared to Flee Its Wrath | WIRED

On Wednesday morning, Hurricane Michael barreled through the Florida panhandle. The most powerful storm to hit the region since record-keeping began in the mid-19th century ran roughshod over the state’s northwest coasts, damaging two local hospitals enough that they have started evacuating their patients from the area—even after the storm has left. At least seven people are dead, 900,000 homes and businesses have lost power, and an estimated 325,000 people who fled the storm have to find their way back home. And in a terrible twist, researchers have found that Hurricane Michael hit some of the state’s least prepared counties. more

by , , 2018-10-12

Report says Santa Clara County among top 10 U.S. counties for out-migration, but population is still growing - Silicon Valley Business Journal

It was the late New York Yankees baseball star and social commentator Yogi Berra who presciently came up with the explanation for what’s going on with Santa Clara County’s shifting population these days. “Nobody goes there anymore,” Berra said of a restaurant he regarded as once popular. “It’s too crowded.” People are fleeing Santa Clara County in record numbers, a report from the apartment search company RentCafe says. The 70,000 who’ve left here over the past five years rank the county 10th among the 3,000-plus U.S. counties in outbound domestic migration. Los Angeles County is No. 1 at 381,000. U.S. counties where the most people are leaving The reason most Americans move is related to housing. Here are the U.S. counties that have seen the largest out-migration in the last five years. Some, however, are also seeing a large influx of newcomers, meaning their overall population is growing. Yet Santa Clara County’s population (and Los Angeles') continue to grow because even more people are moving in, a situation that mirrors that of all but two counties in the top 10 list. The net losers overall are Cook County, Illinois (Chicago) and Wayne County, Michigan (Detroit). The report, by RentCafe’s Nadia Balint, cites U.S. Census data showing the reason most Americans move is related to housing, with 55 percent of all moves due to that reason. Second are work-related reasons — job changes, transfers — as the cause of 18 percent of moves and family causes at 16 percent. The remaining 11 percent of moves are listed as “other reasons.” more

by , , 2018-10-12

Opinion: Stanford GUP process should be open | News | Palo Alto Online |

"If you don't have a seat at the table, you're probably on the menu." This saying should be a warning to Palo Alto and surrounding communities when it comes to Stanford University's once-in-a-generation general use permit (GUP). A new process,

proposed by Stanford, is being considered next week by the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, and it should cause concern for all of us. This may determine whether the public and our local elected representatives will actually have a say on the scale and mitigations for the county's largest-ever development project, or whether a deal will be struck behind closed doors. The community must tell the Board of Supervisors to follow a process that is transparent, participatory and legitimate. more

by , , 2018-10-12

Bay Area counties scrambling to find enough poll workers for November elections – The Stanford Daily

With three weeks left until Election Day, Santa Clara County is on the front lines of what some see as an increasingly difficult recruitment process for election volunteers nationwide. Across the country, counties are struggling to find enough volunteer poll workers to staff voting locations. The shortage is especially pronounced in Bay Area counties with high densities, lower populations of retirees and fewer competitive, well-funded races. more

by , , 2018-10-12

Records show Surf Air owes county $328,371 in taxes | News | Almanac Online |

The commuter airline Surf Air has hardly been in the good graces of a vocal contingent of area residents bothered by its noisy planes flying overhead since it started using the San Carlos Airport. But the San Mateo County tax collector isn't likely to be looking favorably on the company either, given that, according to public records, the airline owes the county hundreds of thousands of dollars in taxes. more

by , , 2018-10-12

New San Mateo County 911 text system unveiled

SAN MATEO (KRON) - U.S. Congresswoman Jackie Speier joined San Mateo police chiefs on Thursday to unveil a new text 911 system going live in the county.
Officials said they need to embrace technology, and they are trying to get ahead of the curve. They want to offer every way possible for people to reach out for help during an emergency. "We are launching this program to make sure that everyone can get ahold of us," Speier (D-Hillsborough) said. Speier, surrounded by police chiefs from all over San Mateo County, gathered to announce that from now on if you're in San Mateo County, you can text for help. more

by , , 2018-10-12

How Kavanaugh's addition to the Supreme Court could affect California - SFChronicle.com

Brett Kavanaugh's elevation to the U.S. Supreme Court could solidify its conservative majority for a decade or more and affect issues as profound as climate change, abortion, health care and the scope of presidential power. And for California, the stakes also include an array of pending and future legal battles on topics ranging from immigration to vehicle emissions, net neutrality and the 2020 census. California Attorney General Xavier Becerra has filed or joined dozens of lawsuits challenging Trump administration decisions to roll back regulations issued under President Barack Obama. The administration, meanwhile, has sued the state over its sanctuary law, which limits cooperation between local police and federal immigration agents, and the net neutrality law that requires internet service providers to treat all traffic equally, rather than speeding up or otherwise favoring content from websites that pay more. Kavanaugh did not address most of those issues directly in his 12 years as a federal appeals court judge before President Trump nominated him in July to succeed the retiring Justice Anthony Kennedy. One exception involved nationwide net neutrality rules, which Kavanaugh voted to strike down in a dissenting opinion last year as a violation of providers' free speech and an abuse of federal regulatory authority. That was before a Trump-appointed Federal Communications Commission majority repealed the rules. more

by , San Francisco Chronicle, 2018-10-12

San Anselmo official envisions Creek Park becoming 'centerpiece' of Ross Valley – Marin Independent Journal

San Anselmo Town Councilman Brian Colbert calls it a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. With a major county flood reduction project soon coming to the San Anselmo Creek, Colbert says it's time to reinvent Creek Park, which hugs the east side of the tributary along the downtown business corridor. "This park could be a centerpiece for the entire Ross Valley," Colbert said. At a Town Council meeting Tuesday, Colbert proposed that the town host a contest for anyone from local students to professional landscape designers to submit their best ideas for the park. The effort aims to help the flood reduction fight and bring new life to downtown San Anselmo, Colbert said. Receiving the blessing of the council, Colbert is now taking the lead to form a committee tasked with developing and launching the contest and then begin fundraising. While all council members are supportive, Councilmen Ford Greene and Matt Brown raised concerns about funding, staff time and other hurdles. Greene said, "yes, it would look great," but that "I'm not at all convinced that we're not spreading ourselves too thin." He said the town has had about 30 meetings to discuss plans to renovate Memorial Park and still has not figured it out. more

by , Marin Independent Journal, 2018-10-12

Composting - Can it Help to Heal the Planet

With so many places to put our environmental fix-it energy, it's easy to become overwhelmed. While we are literally experiencing the discouraging facts about global warming, the encouraging news is important progress is being made - particularly in greenhouse gas emission reduction. The goal of achieving zero waste in California will produce major benefits besides the obvious one of simply reducing waste. This work has brought together natural inter-relationships among waste management, resource recovery, and recycling. The sweet spot in that Venn diagram* is the humble practice of composting. more

by , Sonoma County Gazette, 2018-10-12

Sonoma wedding fireworks display sparks outcry

Most county residents are under the impression that fireworks are illegal in Sonoma County – its an assumption that raised hackles last month when an aerial display snapped, crackled and popped the night of Sept. 23 above Viansa Winery. But, according to county officials, they're not as illegal as most people tend to think. Assistant Fire Chief James Williams is tasked with reviewing and approving fireworks permits for Sonoma County. While the county website states broadly that fireworks are illegal across most of the county, it turns out that only refers to the average Joe and Jane. Established pyrotechnic companies can receive a permit to set off fireworks any time of year, in any established spot in unincorporated Sonoma County, according to Williams. "I won't turn down an application from a licensed pyrotechnics company to put on a show, so long as they meet all safety requirements," he said. more

by , Sonoma Index-Tribune, 2018-10-12

Real estate developer Mazotti joins Napa County Planning Commission, Scott leaves | Local News | napavalleyregister.com

There's a switch on the Napa County Planning Commission that makes wine country growth decisions – Terry Scott has left after 19 years of service and real estate developer Andrew Mazotti is replacing him. Scott submitted his resignation in August and participated in his last meeting on Oct. 3. The county Board of Supervisors on Tuesday ratified Supervisor Alfredo Pedroza's choice of Mazotti as the new commissioner for the 4th supervisorial district. Mazotti is director of Zapolski Real Estate, which is redeveloping First Street Napa with shops and restaurants in downtown Napa. "He grew up in Napa, went to our local schools, is raising a family in Napa," Pedroza said. "I think that's a valuable perspective to have." more

by , Napa Valley Register, 2018-10-12

Voters in a California city weigh taxing vacant properties to help ease homelessness

Like many Oakland residents, Candice Elder, 34, is alarmed at the rapidly increasing number of people pitching tents on sidewalks and under freeways in the city. Unlike most residents, Elder has worked at dozens of homeless encampments as part of a team providing "rapid response services on call 24-7," including food, crisis management and medical assistance. "The rate of homelessness has dramatically increased in the last few years. And you can correlate that to the affordability crisis,"

said Elder, founder and director of The East Oakland Collective nonprofit, as she visited a 65-year-old woman sitting on a corner, surrounded by piles of belongings. It could take years to build more affordable housing, but Elder sees a faster way to relieve homelessness in the city. “There's a lot of vacant properties that haven’t been used for years,” Elder said as she pointed to a fenced empty parcel next to the encampment she visited on a recent morning. “As a city and as a community, we need to take a look at these vacant public and private lands and see how we can use them.” more

by , Marketplace - NPR, 2018-10-12

Golden eagle population soars in East County | Features | thepress.net

Locals know beauty surrounds them at every turn, but what many don’t realize is their home is also a habitat unlike any in the world. Elements present on the East County side of Mount Diablo have created the perfect recipe for nurturing raptors such as the golden eagle, a massive bird with a 7-foot wingspan. Doug Bell, East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) wildlife program manager, has conducted in-depth studies on the birds of prey. He noted the district’s volunteer Golden Eagle Monitoring Team (GMT) monitors about 40 golden eagle nests, which are considered territories, in the two county areas each year. more

by , , 2018-10-12

Oakland Chinatown gang expert Harry Hu could be prison-bound

Harry Hu, a legendary Oakland police gang expert and Asian organized crime investigator, has pleaded guilty to taking bribes from his longtime confidential informant in exchange for helping him avoid prosecution, federal court documents show. Hu admitted that while he worked as an Alameda County District Attorney Inspector he received free trips to Reno and Las Vegas, which included alcohol and paid escorts. Hu also admitted that he knew about the informant’s connection to a 2013 double murder in Mendocino County and that he lied to the FBI about his relationship with the informant, Wing Wo Ma. The plea deal unsealed Thursday tarnishes a 37-year career spent infiltrating Chinese-American gangs and taking down some of their biggest leaders, first as a member of the Oakland Police Department and then as an Alameda County District Attorney inspector until last month. In Oakland’s Chinatown, there was perhaps no cop better known than Hu. Hu, 62, was convicted of conspiracy to commit fraud against the government and bribery, and faces a maximum prison sentence of five years. He appeared Wednesday afternoon before U.S. District Judge Charles Breyer in San Francisco federal court in a hearing closed to the public. When approached by a Bay Area News Group reporter in the hallway outside the courtroom, Hu identified himself but refused to answer questions. more

by , San Jose Mercury News, 2018-10-12

County offers composting class Wednesday, Oct. 24 – Winters Express

Interested in learning how to turn kitchen scraps into high quality compost for garden soil? The Hanna and Herbert Bauer Memorial Garden is hosting a free worm composting class on Wednesday, Oct. 24, from 5:15-6:30 p.m. In this hands-on class, participants will learn how to set up and maintain a simple small-scale worm compost system with the goal of creating a nutrient-rich soil amendment to help their fruits and vegetables grow well. The class will be taught by UC Master Gardener of Yolo County Steve Radosevich, who will be bringing worms to give away to participants. The City of Woodland will also be in attendance to distribute free countertop compost buckets for the kitchen. This is a great opportunity for garden enthusiasts to discover the magic of worm composting and have questions answered. more

by , , 2018-10-12

California Retired Teacher’s Association Yolo County division celebrates 30 year anniversary – Winters Express

Thirty years ago a group of Yolo County retired teachers decided to form their own division of the California Retired Teacher’s Association. The division for Yolo County became Division 83. Their first meeting was held in Woodland on March 17, 1988. This year we celebrate our 30 year anniversary with a special program of shared memories, a slide show of these early years, and lunch with a birthday cake. This celebration is at the Yolo County Office of Education in the Conference Room. We welcome retired

teachers to attend. more

by , , 2018-10-12

News Brief: Yolo County seeking paid poll workers for general election – Winters Express

The Yolo County Elections Office says it has an urgent need for people who can serve as poll workers during this year's general election on Nov. 6. The Elections Office said prospective poll workers need to be available from 6 a.m. Election Day "until all tasks are completed," which the agency said could be around 10 p.m. that evening. Prospective workers also need to have their own transportation and be willing to attend a mandatory training seminar prior to Nov. 6. more

by , , 2018-10-12

Yolo County targeting opioid abuse with medication-assisted treatment

Yolo County has largely been spared the devastating impacts of opioid abuse seen in other counties in California — as well as throughout the country — and local health officials are determined to ensure that remains the case. To that end, the county's primary care provider for Medi-Cal recipients — CommuniCare Health Centers — has embraced a comprehensive program focused on prevention and treatment locally. CommuniCare actually has a long history of providing substance abuse treatment — going back to its days as the Davis Free Clinic, which was established by Dr. John P Jones in 1972 and modeled on the Haight Ashbury Free Clinic in San Francisco. more

by , Davis Enterprise, 2018-10-12

Yolo County DUI efforts draw $194K from state

Yolo County District Attorney Jeff Reisig announced today that the California Office of Traffic Safety has awarded the District Attorney's Office $194,975 for its DUI program. The unit, which was formed in 2012, focuses on the prosecution and prevention of DUI cases as well as outreach, and law enforcement training. The program's goal is to prevent impaired driving and reduce alcohol and drug-impaired traffic fatalities and injuries. The deputy district attorneys assigned to the program prosecute the most serious and complex DUI cases, such as those involving injury and death, and those involving drug impairment. DDAs assigned to these cases handle them through all stages of the criminal process, from the time of the arrest through sentencing. They also focused closely on training law enforcement throughout California on DUI investigation. To date, close to 1,400 officers have been reached through DUI training by the Yolo County District Attorney's OTS grant. more

by , Davis Enterprise, 2018-10-12

Wildwood wastewater treatment plant tour set for Saturday | TheUnion.com

The Nevada County Wastewater Division of the Public Works Department is planning a Saturday tour of the Lake Wildwood Wastewater Treatment Plant, according to a release. Tours at the plant, 12622 Pleasant Valley Road in Penn Valley, offer an inside look at how it all happens. The tours are slated to begin at 1 p.m. and will end around 4 p.m. Free food and refreshments will be available. Nevada County Sanitation District handles nearly a million gallons of water every day through more than 110 miles of pipe and treats it all at 10 treatment plants in western Nevada County. This free tour will give a behind-the-scenes look at the processes. From the point that wastewater leaves a home or business and enters the treatment process, follow the water through the treatment process to where it's released to local creeks and rivers. Organizers expect tours to go over uneven and unpaved ground and will include climbing stairs and walking for three quarters of a mile. more

by , Grass Valley Union, 2018-10-12

Hundreds of marijuana plants eradicated at grow on Yokayo Rancheria in Mendocino County – The Ukiah Daily Journal

The Mendocino County Sheriff's Office announced in a press release Thursday that in recent weeks both the MCSO and the Mendocino County Code Enforcement Office, which handles complaints about cannabis cultivation, received multiple complaints from community members and tribal members about a marijuana

cultivation site on the Yokayo Rancheria. The Yokayo Tribe owns the land, however it is not federally recognized land and therefore is still subject to county and state regulations related to marijuana cultivation and county municipal codes, according to the Sheriff's Office. In late September, members of the County of Mendocino Marijuana Enforcement Team conducted an overflight of the location and saw two plastic greenhouses and over 50 outdoor marijuana plants being grown in the ground. The MCSO stated that while conducting background information on the location, Carmen Christy, a 74-year-old woman from Talmage, was identified as living at the location, and investigators learned that whoever was responsible for the marijuana cultivation might be using water diverted from the Tribe's general well, which is designated as household water and not for commercial agriculture. more

by , Ukiah Daily Journal, 2018-10-12

Tourism remains driving factor for Tahoe, Truckee economy | SierraSun.com

Lake Tahoe has long been a destination for tourists, driven by scenic views and Tahoe's clear waters. Truckee's recognition as "coolest ski town" in 2018 by Matador Network showed the town could compete with huge ski areas such as Mammoth Lakes and Revelstoke, British Columbia. And it appears, when it comes to tourism, the hits just keep on coming. Truckee's visitor center continues to welcome increasing numbers of people, with 221,067 visitors in 2017. That's up from 196,886 visitors in 2016, despite receiving significantly less snowfall in the 2017 season. According to a Dean Runyan Associates report, the tourism industry in Nevada County supplied 3,670 jobs and generated $12.5 million in local tax revenue last year, an 11 percent increase from 2016. The report also stated that visitor spending reached $343.7 million in 2017, increasing 5 percent from the previous year. In 2015 Truckee established a Truckee Tourism Business Improvement District to "broaden appeal of Truckee" to increasing the occupancy rate and raise Transient Occupancy Tax Revenue, according to a town staff report. more

by , Sierra Sun, 2018-10-12

Some Horses During Modoc County Round-Up May Face Slaughter

MODOC COUNTY, Calif. - A controversial round-up of 1,000 wild horses in Modoc County, turns out some could wind up being sold for slaughter. This is happening despite an appeal from Senator Dianne Feinstein. The U.S. Forest Service is overseeing the roundup. The land is supposed to have 200 to 400 horses but the population has nearly 4,000 of them and growing. Which means less food for other wildlife. Younger horses will have 30 days to be adopted or sold, while older horses' futures are uncertain. more

by , , 2018-10-12

Rehab facility housing offenders opens near school in Los Molinos | KRCR

LOS MOLINOS, Calif. — Imagine a rehab facility that houses offenders opening down the street from a high school. That is what's happening at the Elijah House in Los Molinos. They opened their doors last week and are housing registered offenders who are being treated for substance abuse. And this isn't the first location they've opened. The Founder and Chief Executive Officer of the Elijah House, Joseph Henderson, says this is the ninth location they're opening but the first in Tehama County. more

by , , 2018-10-12

CalHome awards $500K to Yuba County for eligible victims of the Cascade Fire | News | appeal-democrat.com

One year after a wildfire tore through the Loma Rica area destroying hundreds of structures and claiming the lives of four people, a state agency awarded Yuba County half a million dollars to assist eligible homeowners who were impacted by the Cascade Fire with low-interest loans. The funding is designated for disaster rehabilitation assistance, including reconstruction. Yuba County Community Development and Services Director Kevin Mallen applied for the funding in May on behalf of the county and its residents. Mallen said the CalHome program funding will provide a low-interest loan with a 30-year term and deferred monthly payments to eligible low or very low-income households that were uninsured or underinsured at the time of the wildfire. more

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